Pasture insect pest management

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Overview

- Who’s the enemy?
- The IPM approach
- Practical management solutions for key pasture insect pasture pests
Who’s the enemy?

• Insect pests typically most responsible for pasture damage include:
  – Corbie grub
  – Red and blackheaded cockchafer larvae
  – Redlegged earth mite (RLEM) adults

• Other pasture pests include;
  – Lucerne flea
  – Army worm
  – Oxycanus grass grub
The IPM approach

• Understand the insect’s lifecycle

• Monitor pest population numbers

• Cultural controls

• Use synthetic and biological insecticides
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Corbie</th>
<th>Winter Corbie</th>
<th>Blackheaded Cockchafer</th>
<th>Redheaded Cockchafer 1st Year</th>
<th>Redheaded Cockchafer 2nd Year</th>
<th>Red Legged Earth Mite</th>
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**Lifecycle stage**
- eggs hatch & early larvae development
- larvae development (pasture damaging)
- pupae (non pasture damaging)
- soil borne adult (non pasture damaging)
- adult & egg laying
- adult (pasture damaging)

Tasmanian Pasture and Forage Pests, DPIW 2007
Managing corbie grubs

• Cultural control:
  – Control excessively long pasture from late spring to summer.
  – If appropriate, consider alternatives to ryegrass-based pastures.

• Check paddocks from mid–late autumn onwards.

• Insecticide control:
  – Pest threshold of two per spadeful.
  – Spray late in the afternoon with a registered insecticide.
Managing redheaded cockchafers

• Cultural control:
  – Control excessively long pasture from during spring.
  – If appropriate consider alternatives to ryegrass-based pastures.

• Check paddocks from summer onwards.

• Insecticide control:
  – No knockdown insecticide control options.
  – Chafer Guard (*Metarhizium anisoplaie*) isn’t currently commercially available.
Managing blackheaded cockchafers

• Cultural control:
  – Maintain ground cover during summer.
  – Minimise the amount of annual grasses and weeds present.
  – If appropriate consider alternatives to ryegrass-based pastures.

• Check paddocks from early autumn onwards.

• Insecticide control:
  – Pest threshold of six per spadeful.
  – Spray post rainfall in the late afternoon.
    with a registered insecticide
Managing blackheaded cockchafer

Weekly insect pest population data available at: 
Managing redlegged earth mite

• Cultural control:
  – Select RLEM-resistant sub-clovers.
  – Graze out long pasture during summer and early autumn.

• Check paddocks in spring and autumn.

• Insecticide control:
  – Insecticide (a.i. imidaclopid) seed coating.
  – Timerite®:
    www.wool.com/woolgrower-tools/timerite
Top three take-home messages

1. Monitor to manage.

2. Know your insect pest thresholds.

3. Target your management activities towards the highest-value pastures.
Tools, resources and training

- Tasmanian Pasture and Forage Pests: Identification, Biology and Control, DPIW, 2007


- Timerite®: www.wool.com/woolgrower-tools/timerite
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